

How to Use GIS Data

The Bitterroot National Forests uses ESRI's GIS software (ArcGIS, ArcMap), and stores all corporate GIS data in ESRI's proprietary format (Geodatabases, ArcInfo coverages or ArcMap shapefiles). The datasets available online are stored as wzip compressed ArcMap Personal Geodatabases, or shapefiles to conserve space and facilitate [download](#). To use them, you must uncompress them using winzip, or other compression software that recognizes these file types. In addition to their commercial software, ESRI offers ArcExplorer software free for importing and viewing geodatabases and shapefiles. You can download the software from their web site -- www.esri.com/software/arcexplorer/index.html

Spatial Data

Spatial Data is provided in Personal Geodatabase format or ArcMap shapefile format. These files can be used in Arc/Info, ArcMap, or ArcExplorer GIS software packages. www.esri.com.

Many other GIS and graphics software packages have a utility to import these files.

Tabular Data

Tabular Data is generally provided in dBase IV format. These files can be imported into ArcGIS, ArcMap, or ArcExplorer GIS software packages and joined to their associated gis coverages. An additional file containing documentation may be included with the tabular data.